US Army Corps
of Engineers
Vicksburg District
4155 Clay Street
Vicksburg, MS 39183-3435
www.mvk.usace.army.mil

Public Notice

APPLICATION NO.:	ASJ-MVK-2005-1645
EVALUATOR:	Ms. A. Susan Jarvis
PHONE NO.:	(601) 631-5146
FAX NO.:	(601) 631-5459
E-MAIL:	regulatory@mvk02.usace.army.mil
DATE:	February 8, 2006
EXPIRATION DATE:	March 1, 2006

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Services are considering an application for a Department of the Army permit and State water quality certification for the work described herein. A water quality certification is required in accordance with statutory authority contained in the LRS 30:2074 A(3) and provisions of the Clean Water Act. Comments should be forwarded to the Vicksburg District, Attention: CEMVK-OD-F, at the above address, and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Services, Post Office Box 4313, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4313.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has a copy of the application on file in their office in Baton Rouge and may be inspected at any time between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Copies may be obtained from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality upon payment of cost of printing. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality will make a final decision on the water quality certification pertaining to this application within 30 days after expiration of this notice.

Law Requiring a Permit: Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344), which applies to discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States.

Name of Applicant:
Louisiana Department of
Transportation and Development
Post Office Box 94245
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Location of Work: Sections 19, 30, 31, and 17 of T16N-R3W, latitude 32º20”41.9” longitude 92º40’40.4”, within Dugdemona

River drainage basin, Jackson Parish, Louisiana.

Description of Work: (See enclosed map and drawings.)

The following descriptions of the proposed project and associated impacts are based upon information provided by the applicant.

The applicant is applying for a Department of the Army permit to mechanically clear and fill 48.08 acres of wetlands and 3.28 acres of other waters of the United States associated with the construction and maintenance of the widening and overlay of U.S. Highway 167. The proposed project would extend from approximately one mile southwest of Hilltop, Louisiana, to approximately one mile north of Quitman, Louisiana. Four new lanes of asphaltic concrete roadway, separated by a 53.5-foot depressed median, would be constructed to the west of the existing alignment.

Roadbed dimensions for the newly constructed four-lane roadway would have an average top width of 72 feet and an average bottom width of 74 feet. The average cleared right-of-way would be 315 feet, with a minimum right-of-way of 250 feet to a maximum right-of-way of 526 feet. The project would require approximately 229,864 cubic yards of general excavation and 719,422 cubic yards of embankment. The length for the embankment portion of the project would be 2.56 miles. A related embankment project of U.S. Highway 167 from North Hodge, Louisiana, to just south of Hilltop, Louisiana (S.P. No. 023-06-0043) was permitted in August 2003 as MVK-2002-145, and the construction has been completed. The state project would also include paving from North Hodge, Louisiana to Quitman, Louisiana, and would be 7.98 miles in length.

There are two connector roads that connect the existing U.S. Highway 167 to the proposed project. The south connector road would intersect the proposed U.S. Highway 167 at STA. 595+64.30 while the north connector road would intersect U.S. Highway 167 at STA. 612+15.20.

The purpose of the work is to widen and upgrade the existing U.S. Highway 167 roadway, to provide a four-lane north-south link from Alexandria, Louisiana to the Arkansas state line to improve vehicular mobility and to improve accessibility along the U.S. Highway 167 corridor by increasing the safety and level of service of the highway.

The proposed project calls for the existing U.S. Highway 167 from the south side of Hilltop, Louisiana to the north side of Quitman, Louisiana in Jackson Parish to be four-laned and upgraded to meet current transportation standards. This proposed project is the result of legislation created in 1989, known as the Transportation Infrastructure Model for Economic Development (TIMED), which designated certain highways and transportation facilities for improvement. One objective of the TIMED program

is to ensure that a four-laned highway connects most major urban areas of the state. The four-laning of U.S. Highway 167 is an important element in linking central and north Louisiana with Arkansas.

A total of four sites were examined and four sites were identified as jurisdictional wetland areas that would be impacted by the project. Site 1 is located in the vicinity of Station No. (STA.) 574+00 to 604+00 and would impact approximately 28.31 acres of wetlands. Site 2 is located in the vicinity of STA. 605+50 to 608+00 and would impact approximately 1.60 acres of wetlands. Site 3 covers an area in the vicinity of STA. 610+50 to 621+00 and would impact approximately 5.42 acres of wetlands. Site 4 is located in the vicinity of STA. 625+50 to 655+00 and would impact approximately 12.75 acres of wetlands.

The dominant species of vegetation at the delineated wetland site include: *Acer rubrum, Boehmeria cylindrica, Campsis radicans, Carex sp., Ilex decidua, Juncus effusus*, *Ligustrum sinense, Liquidambar styraciflua, Nyssa sylvatica, Osumnda regalis, Polygonum* sp., *Quercus laurifolia, Quercus lyrata, Quercus nigra, Salix nigra, Saururus cernuus, Scirpus sp.,* and *Smilax* sp.

A total of approximately 48.08 acres of jurisdictional wetlands would be impacted by the construction of the captioned project. The applicant's proposal included minimization of wetland impacts in accordance with their standard specifications. Unavoidably lost wetland functions and values would be appropriately mitigated.

In addition to wetlands, a total of 3.28 acres of other waters of the United States would be impacted by the construction of the captioned project. Of the four delineated sites, three were identified as other waters of the United States. The locations and amounts of impacts for these sites are shown in the Wetland Delineation Site Summary Table. Realignment of the stream and filling of the old channel would occur at Cypress Bayou located in the vicinity of STA. 574+00 to 604+00, an unnamed intermittent stream located in the vicinity of STA 627+00 to 628+00, and an unnamed perennial stream located in the vicinity of 641+00 to 641+50.

The proposed bridges over Cypress Bayou, located in the vicinity of STA. 601+89.99 to 603+31.32 (Northbound) and STA. 600+23.25 to STA. 602+21.64 (Southbound) would be concrete slab span bridges. Impacts to wetlands associated with the bridge construction would include approach and revetment work.

The placement of dredged and/or fill material in waters of the United States associated with the mechanized land clearing requires a Department of the Army Permit.

Upon reviewing this notice, you should write to this office to provide your opinion of the impacts this work will have on the natural and human environment and address any mitigation you believe is necessary to offset these impacts. Other comments are welcome, but the above information will further our review of the applicant's plan as proposed. Comments of a general nature are not as helpful as those specific to the impacts of the subject project.

State Water Quality Permit: The State Pollution Control Agency must certify that the described work will comply with the State's water quality standards and effluent limitations before a Corps permit is issued.

Cultural Resources: An initial review indicates that the proposed project would not affect any of the sites in Jackson Parish listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Copies of this notice have been sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer, Federally Recognized Tribes, the Corps archaeologists, and other interested parties for comment on potential effects to cultural resources that could result from this activity.

Endangered Species: Our initial finding is that the proposed work would not affect any endangered species or their critical habitat. This proposal is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and any comments regarding endangered species or their critical habitat will be addressed in our evaluation of the described work.

Flood Plain: In accordance with 44 CFR Part 60 (Flood Plain Management and Use), participating communities are required to review all proposed development to determine if a flood plain development permit is required. Flood plain administrators should review the proposed development described in this public notice and apprise this office of any flood plain development permit requirements.

Evaluation Factors: The decision whether or not to issue a permit will be based upon an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its expected adverse effects. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered; among these are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, historic values, fish and wildlife values, flood damage prevention, land use classification, navigation, recreation, water supply, water quality, energy needs, safety, food requirements and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the proposed activity will include application of the guidelines published by the Environmental Protection Agency under authority of Section

404(b) of the Clean Water Act.

Public Involvement: The purpose of this notice is to solicit comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties. These comments will be used to evaluate the impacts of this project. All comments will be considered and used to help determine whether to issue the permit, deny the permit, or issue the permit with conditions, and to help us determine the amount and type of mitigation necessary. This information will be used in our Environmental Assessment or Impact Statement. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing.

Opportunity for a Public Hearing: Any person may make a written request for a public hearing to consider this permit application. This request must be submitted by the public notice expiration date and must clearly state why a hearing is necessary. Failure of any agency or individual to comment on this notice will be interpreted to mean that there is no objection to the proposed work. Please bring this announcement to the attention of anyone you know who might be interested in this matter.

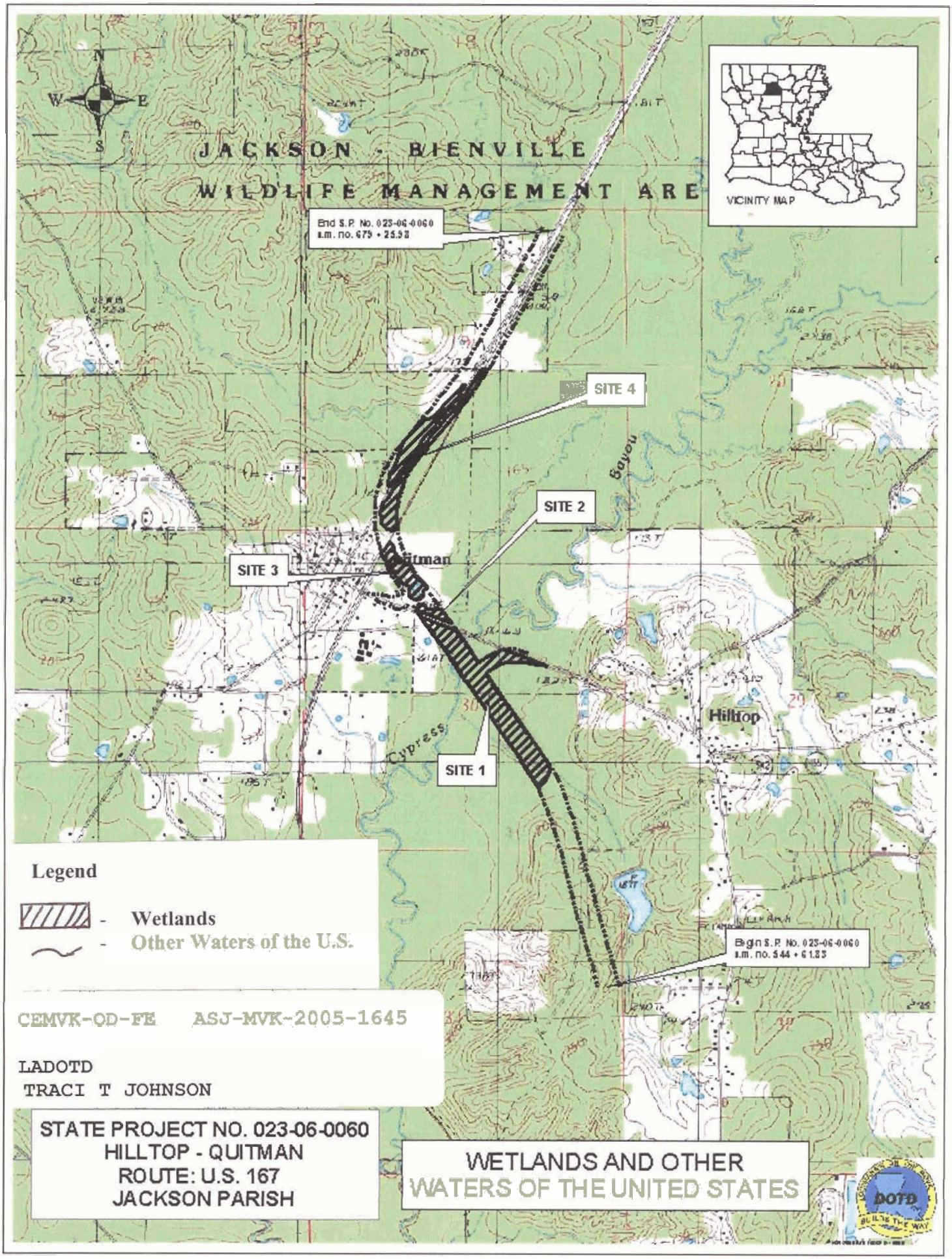
Notification of Final Permit Actions: Each month, the final permit actions from the preceding month are published on the Vicksburg District Regulatory web page. To access this information, you may follow the link from the Regulatory web page, http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/offices/od/odf/main.asp, or go directly to the Final Permit Actions web page at http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/offices/od/odf/PubNotice/MonthlyNotice/pnmain.asp.

W. Harold Lee
Team Leader
Evaluation Section

WETLAND DELINEATION SITE SUMMARY TABLE
STATE PROJECT NO. 023-06-0060
U.S. Highway 167 – Hilltop - Quitman
Jackson Parish, Louisiana
Sites 1 - 4

Site	Station		Total Impacts (Acres)		Type
	Start	End	Wetlands	Other Waters	
1	574+00	604+00	28.31 (F)	1.24 (B,C, R)	BLH, PS, CB
2	605+50	608+00	1.60 (F)	--	BLH
3	610+50	621+00	5.42 (F)	0.62 (F)	BLH, P
4	625+50	655+00	12.75 (F)	1.42 (C, R)	BLH, IS, PS
Totals			48.08	3.28	

Legend: BLH – Bottomland Hardwood; CB – Cypress Bayou;
IS – Intermittent Stream; PS – Perennial Stream; P = Pond
(C) – Culvert; (F) – Fill; (B) – Bridge; (R) – Realignment


JACKSON - BIENVILLE
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT ARE
VICINITY MAP
End S.P. No. 023-06-0060
a.m. no. 679 + 25.33
SITE 4
SITE 2
SITE 3
SITE 1
Bayou
Cypress
Hilltop
Begin S.P. No. 023-06-0060
a.m. no. 544 + 61.83
Legend
Wetlands
Other Waters of the U.S.
CEMVK-OD-FE ASJ-MVK-2005-1645
LADOTD
TRACI T JOHNSON
STATE PROJECT NO. 023-06-0060
HILLTOP - QUITMAN
ROUTE: U.S. 167
JACKSON PARISH
WETLANDS AND OTHER
WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES